

Member, or a member of the media, peddle in propaganda.

Conservatives should shake off the role of useful idiots and present Putin, this war, and all demagogic leaders as what they truly are.

Vladimir Putin has poisoned journalists and jailed his opposition. He has bombed hospitals and schools. He has slaughtered innocents in Syria. Today, he is murdering civilians in Ukraine.

If this has not been enough for these useful idiots and their ilk, I urge them to find the red line Putin would have to cross.

To the puppets that are on our screens, our social media, and in the Halls of Congress perpetrating his lies, I say: Enough. You are helping Putin in this war. You are helping him strip Ukrainians of their freedom. You are helping our own country slide further from democracy.

Lincoln reminded us that we cannot escape history, that we will be remembered in spite of ourselves. In the end, history will remember those who stood up for the truth and the cowards who did not.

□ 1015

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, it is undeniable that religious freedom is America's keystone. This great country was founded by men and women who fled religious persecution and sought to govern themselves according to their religious beliefs.

Despite religious freedom having been woven into our constitutional system for well over two centuries, and the precedents it has established, Democrats are choosing to play judge, jury, and executioner in its trial.

Today, religious organizations are under attack by the woke agenda of Democrats. Those on the left claim that faith-based organizations must abandon their conscience and amend their employment practices, or they should not have access to Federal contracts or funds.

It is a damning ultimatum. Imagine how many faith-based organizations would be forced to close their doors because of this.

Madam Speaker, this coordinated campaign is being carried out by the left, and it is guided by the assumption that a radical, progressive dogma is more legitimate than religious beliefs. That assumption is pure insanity.

In this country, faith is not subjugated or left at the door. It is carried with us no matter where we may go.

I applaud every man and woman who is standing up to this egregious assault from the left and is fighting for the right to live by religious convictions at work and in business.

President Biden's so-called Build Back Better framework is riddled with

discriminatory provisions. One clause would have required faith-based childcare providers to abandon their faith during program hours if they wanted to participate in the Federal program.

And in the Community Services Block Grant program, the Democrats want to strip a provision that protects faith-based providers' right to remain strong in their faith as they serve individuals in need.

This protection has been in place without controversy or harm to any individual seeking assistance for decades. Why change it now? I think we know.

This isn't just religious persecution; it is textbook coercion. Unfortunately, there is more.

Democrats have also sought to remove protections for religious non-profit organizations and Federal contractors. Like their secular counterparts, faith-based charities in the United States simply want to serve the less fortunate, but discriminatory legislation could keep them from being able to do that.

Faith-based charities and religious Federal contractors alike deserve the chance to practice their religion freely without government interference.

It appears Democrats need a refresher on the First Amendment.

The government does not bestow the freedom of religion upon us; it is a freedom we have possessed since birth.

Whenever we see protections for religious freedom being chipped away in this country, it is our solemn duty as Americans and people of faith to take a stand.

BUILDING A BETTER AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the impact the COMPETES Act will have on our Nation.

We are seeing the best economy for American workers in decades, with people earning higher wages, better benefits, and better jobs, thanks to President Biden's leadership.

With that said, when I visited with the leadership from the Port of Houston in my district a while back, they expressed their gratitude for Congress' strong investment in the maritime infrastructure needed to keep America's economy moving in the right direction.

They also expressed concern, however, that more workers will need technical training than our current system will be able to provide.

The America COMPETES Act will be that critical next step in providing vital maritime workforce training.

My home district, Texas-29, will benefit greatly from the large grant program for domestic maritime worker training and education included in the America COMPETES Act.

I was proud to see this maritime grant program language included, as it

was originally part of my bill, H.R. 987, which was one that was introduced to strengthen our maritime workforce.

This investment will provide more Houston area workers the technical training, education, and resources needed to become qualified for good-paying maritime jobs.

For example, the San Jacinto College Maritime Center in my district helps thousands of students learn new skills so they can earn good paychecks, paychecks that hold families together.

Located just outside of Houston, the San Jacinto College Maritime Program offers maritime training and deck-level coursework for all professional mariners. They cover everything from entry-level deckhands on an inland towboat to unlimited tonnage masters on the world's largest ships.

The COMPETES Act will empower the maritime grant program that will directly benefit this community college; more workers for maritime work.

But like the San Jacinto Community College in my district, there are also similar training centers across the Nation that will benefit. The COMPETES Act will help thousands of students learn new skills so they can provide comfortably for their families and live a good life with good benefits.

This is another way the America COMPETES Act will strengthen our supply chains. While there will be plenty of large-scale improvements across the Nation, there will also be many local governments like this in our hometowns that will benefit.

I look forward to President Biden signing this bill into law. And this is yet, Madam Speaker, another example of how we are building a better America for generations to come.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, this morning, I wish to address the American people and thank them for their hard work and their outstanding effort that funds our government and our Active Duty military personnel and veterans who have kept us safe, our law enforcement, our first responders, and all those who go to work every day making sure we are safe in our communities, safe in our Nation, and safe around the world.

I also want to thank all the people that go to work every day to earn a living and support their families. And, yes, those are the people, all of them, that provide the revenue by which America can operate, something I think President Biden has forgotten.

He has been in Washington, D.C., for half a century, and he proposed a budget earlier this week that spends \$73 trillion over the next 10 years and increases our national debt by 50 percent by the year 2032. Under that budget, the debt will be \$45 trillion.

And to say what the President said, a budget will show you your values. Well, evidently, he doesn't value our next generation.

We all want our children to do better than we did and have it better than we did. How can they do that when he proposes to saddle them with so much debt?

When you look at the national debt that we have, it is held by the public, it is held by foreign governments, and some of it is called intragovernmental debt, which means it is debt that is held by other government agencies.

The Social Security Administration holds about 13 percent of our debt currently. I think this budget puts our seniors at risk and their ability to live a good life in retirement on a program which they funded for so many years from their paychecks.

So, we look at the budget. I have read through it. All these items should be a red flag for anybody that wants to support this.

It is not supporting America's values. It is not supporting our next generation. It is not helping our seniors. It is helping priorities laid forth by a man who has been in Washington, D.C., for 50 years.

Evidently, he has gotten used to spending more than what the revenue brings in in our country.

I remember President Reagan. This is, I believe, the 41st anniversary of the assassination attempt. I think President Reagan, when someone would say, He is spending like a drunken sailor. Then the President would say, Well, at least the sailor is spending his own money.

We are entrusted with the money that the government takes from the citizens of the United States. We need to use it responsibly. We need to invest it in their priorities and not in the priorities of the people inside the beltway.

I think he is too far out of touch, and quite frankly, there are a lot of things that we can't afford.

What we should be looking at is protecting life. We should be looking at being responsible so that our kids are not saddled with so much debt and that our seniors can retire and count on a program they funded their entire lives.

We have already seen the real cost of President Biden's tax-and-spend policies at the pump, in the grocery store, on the farm, and on Main Street America.

It is time we stopped leaving a financial disaster for the next generation and put together a budget that meets the needs of the American people, not the needs of President Biden and Speaker PELOSI.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO FORMER CONGRESSMAN ESTEBAN TORRES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today as chair of the Congressional

Hispanic Caucus to pay tribute to a champion for Latinos and Latinas and a leader for all, the late CHC chair, Congressman Esteban Torres.

He did everything in his power to increase Hispanic representation in Congress, dedicated himself to disenfranchised communities, and had an unwavering commitment to equity.

Esteban Torres was born in Arizona in 1930 to a proud Mexican family of migrant and copper mine workers. After the deportation of his father through the disastrous Mexican Repatriation program, his family moved to east Los Angeles. Torres never saw his father again.

As a self-proclaimed barrio kid, he grew up navigating the difficulties of a young Latino male without a father in Los Angeles, but that did not stop him from achieving excellence.

From a young age, Torres was consistently recognized as a peacemaker, consensus builder, and leader in his community.

He knew that leadership meant serving. And when he turned 19, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and fought in the Korean war.

Later in life, the necessities of raising a family pushed Torres to work as a welder on the assembly line at an auto plant. There, he became involved with the labor movement and assumed the role of chief steward in the United Auto Workers union's local branch.

His ability to lead, inspire, and defend workers' rights drove him to become the Nation's director of the Inter-American Bureau for Caribbean and Latin American Affairs, and so he began his political career.

After serving under President Carter as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, and as White House Special Assistant for Hispanic Affairs, Torres represented California's 34th District, the City of Norwalk in the County of Los Angeles, from 1983 until 1999.

From his first year in Congress, he defended workers' rights, protected consumers, advanced environmental justice, and secured veterans' services.

Through it all, he never forgot his community. As chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, he pushed forward transformative legislation for immigrants in our country, such as the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act.

This historic legislation gave legal status to more than 3 million immigrants, ultimately protecting other families from the same horror his family experienced many years back.

Torres also led the CHC at a time when our communities did not have the representation we do today. After eight terms, he expressed: "I have reached the pinnacle of success in my own eyes. It is time to let the younger generation succeed."

□ 1030

Today, I succeed him as chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, a role I

take with much responsibility because I know I have big shoes to fill.

Thanks to his efforts, our communities can feel seen in the 38 members of the CHC that, inspired by Congressman Torres, serve with determination and compassion. I know that we, inspired by the late Congressman Esteban Torres, carry the torch to expand Hispanic representation in Congress and create a House and a Senate that is more representative of our Nation.

Esteban Torres, mentor, leader, amigo, after 91 years of touching lives and changing this Nation, in January 2022 you passed away. You lived a long and impactful life of service, and you left this Nation better than how you found it for future generations. Gracias.

FARM KILLER TAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANN. Madam Speaker, in preparation for reauthorizing the farm bill in 2023, I rise today to deliver the sixth installment of my farm bill impact series, where I am highlighting various aspects of the farm bill that deserve Congress' awareness and support. For this legislation to be effective, it must support the efforts of both today's farmers, ranchers, and agricultural producers, as well as those of the next generation.

I had planned to get up on the floor today to talk about how America's hope for food security in the future lies on the shoulders of young Americans who are voluntarily bearing the burden of feeding, fueling, and clothing the world. I was going to talk about all the great programs and organizations that we have in this country for young people who are interested in agriculture. I was going to talk about the new Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program through USDA, and the importance of preserving the stepped-up basis in the Tax Code to ensure that family farms in America don't get taxed out of existence.

Then President Biden's disastrous budget came out earlier this week. President Biden threatens the stepped-up basis yet again as we know it in the budget that he just released. If it becomes law, the food security and, therefore, national security of America hangs in the balance.

Here is why the stepped-up basis exists and why it is so important. Let's say you are a young person working on your family's farm, and you are slowly taking on responsibility and risk. You work for your parents in the operation until the time comes for you to inherit the land, equipment, and livestock. When that happens, the Federal Government should not jump in and impose taxes on the unrealized gain of your inherited land and assets. This principle is called the stepped-up basis, which has long been precedent in the Tax Code.